

# WIT IN

A Constable.

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A Comedy written 1639.

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The Author  
HENRY GLAPTHORNE.

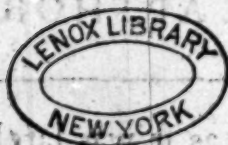
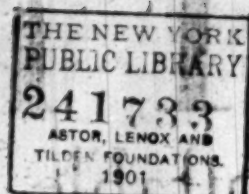
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And now Printed as it was lately Acted  
at the Cock-pit in *Drury lane*, by  
their Majesties Servants,  
with good allowance.

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L O N D O N:  
Printed by *Io. Okes*, for *F. C.* and  
are to be sold at his shops in Kings-  
street at the signe of the Goat, and  
in Westminster Hall. 1640.

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To the Right Honourable  
his singular good Lord  
**THOMAS**  
**LORD**  
**WENTWORTH.**

My LORD!



O many are the noble attributes inherent to *your* Heroicke Nature, that 'tis difficult to distinguish whether they be *divers*, or one intire *virtue*, but impossible to define which ought to be accounted the Superlative in so perfect a *Harmony*: to ascribe to *one* more then to *another*, were to dero-

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*The Epistle Dedicatory.*  
gate from the justice of either. I cannot therefore proclaime twas any particular, but your generall Goodnesse which has imboldn'd me to intrude this Poem on the Patronage of your Name, as honourable in vertue as in Greatnesse: nor shall I tender any excuse for the presumption, since I am assured your Lordship cannot conceive an anger from the true devotion of

Your humblest honourer,

Hen: Glapthorne.

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## The PROLOGUE.

**Y**e need not feare the Gentlemen, although  
 I come thus arm'd, tis but to let you know  
 I am in office; in my owne defence,  
 And to secure me from the violence,  
 Which might from you (who now my Iudges sit)  
 Be offered to this Trophoe of my wit:  
 And cause I know that you will obay  
 Authority, I doe charge you, like the Play:  
 Thinke who I am, how often I may catch  
 You at ill houres in Tavernes, or itb' Watch;  
 In Fraies sometimes, nay sometimes (not so trench  
 Too much upon you) with a pretty wench.  
 All this is possible, and Gentlemen,  
 Consider how my rage will use you then,  
 If you should now, as sure tis, warth your feare,  
 Be in the censure of my wis severe,  
 Next I'me implacable; and though the Tribe  
 Of Constables doe us't, He take no bribe  
 To let you passe: These sturdy knaves will take  
 Not the least mercy on you for my sake,  
 Nor will the Iustice free you: (to your smart)  
 You'll find, he and his Clarke will take my part,  
 I can but gently warne you to prevent  
 A danger, nay a certaine punishment,  
 Should you dislike: for if the Play doe fall  
 Vnder your votes, He apprehend you all.

## EPILOGUE.

**A**Re you resolv'd yet Gentlemen? I am  
 In earnest haste of Towne-affaires, and came  
 To know your minds: how's that? there's one I spy  
 That will dislike, to th' Counter instantly  
 With him; intreat Sir, shall not prevaile,  
 Nor shall you thinke to come out upon baile.  
 For in this case (believe it) I'de not spare  
 (Though the sword were borne before him) my Lord Major;  
 Nor should the Court of Aldermen reprieve  
 For such a f. & my good friend Master Shreive.  
 If so severe to them then, who by vow,  
 Are my owne bretheren: what will become of you?  
 I have consider'd; and will now commit  
 To your free votes the Cen'ures of my wit.  
 For though their dulnesse (whom I've threatned) may  
 Dislike (you ave wit) and will allow the play.



## The Persons in the Play.

Thorowgood, a young Gentleman, sutor to Clare.

Valentine his friend, a sutor to Grace.

Knowell their friend.

Sir Timothy Shallowit, a Country Knight.

Sir Geffery Hold-fast, a Knight of Epping.

Jeremy Hold-fast, his Sonne.

Alderman Covet.

Busie, a Linnen Draper, the Constable.

Tristram, servant to Jeremy Hold-fast.

Formal, servant to Alderman Covet.

A Parson.

Four match-men.

Clare, neece to Alderman Covet.

Grace, his Daughter.


Maudlin, servant to Clare.

Nel, daughters to Busie.

Fidlers boy, Drawer, Attendants.

The Scene London.

WIT



# VVitina Constable.

## *Actus primus, Scena prima.*

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Enter *Holdfast, Tristram.*

*Holdfast.*

**I**D you ere we departed from the Colledge  
Orelooke my library?  
*Trist.* Yes sir, I spent two dayes in sorting Poets  
from Historians,  
As many nights in placing the divines  
On their owne chayres, / I meane their shelves, and then  
In separating Philosophers from those people  
That kill men with a license : your Physitians  
Cost me a whole dayes labour, and I finde sir,  
Although you tell me learning is immortall,  
The paper and the parchment, tis contayn'd in,  
Savors of much mortality.

*Hold.* I hope my bookes are all in health. (eaten more

*Trist.* In the same case the Mothes have left them, who have  
Authenticke learning then would richly furnish  
A hundred country pedants, yet the wormes  
Are not one letter wiser.

*Hold.* I have beene idle  
Since I came up from Cambridge, goe to my stationer  
And bid him send me *Snares* Metaphysickes,

B

*Tote*

Tolet de anima is new forth,  
So are ~~Gravellar~~ commentaries on  
Primum secundum Thomas Aquinas,  
Get me the Lyricke Poets. And ———

Trist. I admire

How he retaines these Authors names, of which  
He understands no sillable, 'twere better  
Ibought the Authentick Legend of Sir Bevis,  
Some six new Ballads and the famous Poems  
Writ by the learned waterman.

Hold. John Taylor, get me his nonsense.

Trist. You meant all his workes sir.

Hold. And a hundred of Bookers new Almanacks.

Trist. And the divell to boot,

Your fathers bookes in which he keeps th accounts  
Of all his coyne will scarce yield crowns to afford  
Your fancy volums : why you have already  
Enough to furnish a new Vatican,  
A hundred country pedants can read dictats  
To their young papists out of Setons logicks,  
Or Golius Ethicks, and make them arrive,  
Promerents learn'd enough in one bare twelmonth  
To instruct the parish they were borne in : you  
Out of an itch to this lame foolish learning  
Bestow more money yearly upon bookes:  
Then would for convert sisters build an almshouse.

Hold. You will displease my patience Tristram.

Trist. I speake truth : If you shud want, your learning scarce  
Capable of being town Clerk, or at best, (would make you  
To be a famous Tyrant unto Boyes,  
And weare out birch upon them : or perchance  
you may arrive to be the City Poet,  
And send the little moysture of your braine  
To grace a Lord Maiors festivall with showes,  
Alluding to his trade, or to the company  
Of which he's free, these are the best preferments  
That can attend your learning.

Hold. May Tristram, the spirit of my learning stir me up



To give thee due correction.

(Cosen,

*Trist.* Would you study? as does young *Thore* good your noble  
Not bookes, but men which are true living volums:

You would like him, be held rich ith' esteeme

Of all the illustrious wits that deeke the city

When the extent of your admirers is

Confinde to fresh men: and such youths as only

Know how to frame a syllogisme in *Darj*,

And make the ignorant believe by Logicke

The Moones made of a Holland Cheefe: and the man in't.

A swagbellied Dutch Burger

*Intras Thore* good.

*Thore.* Cosen *Holdfast*, a good day attend

Thy learned piarmater: pritheec tell me

How doe the *Cabalists* and ancient *Rabbins*

And thou agree? will they be sociable,

And drinke their mornings draught of Helicon

With thee: have they instructed you to prove yet

That the world runs on wheelles? or that the sea

May be drunke off by a shoole of Whales? such things

You know there are in nature.

*Hold.* O far stranger.

*Thore.* Peace you booke-worme,

Fit only to devour more paper then

A thousand grand tobacco men or a legion

Of boyes in pellets to their elderne gunnes.

Dost thinke to live this life still? you're not now

Amongst your cues at Cambridge, but in London,

Come up to see your mistress beaution Clare,

The glory of the city: goe and court her,

As does become a gentleman of carriage,

Without your Tropes and figures Inkehorne termes,

Fit only for a Mountebanke or Bedant,

Or all your Physickes Metaphysickes and Meteors,

(Tomes larger farre and more replete with lies,

Then *Surius*, *Gallo-Belgicus*, or the welsh

Bard *Geffrey Monmouth*) that be straight-way made

Pitifull Martyrs.

*Hold.* Why cosen I had thought.

*Thoro.* Thy selfe an errant ideot, that's the steeft  
Thought for thy braine more dull then a fat Burgers,  
Or reverend countrey justices, whose wit  
Lies in his spruce clearkes standish, thou wert begot  
Surely ith' wane oth' Moone, when natures tooles  
Were at lame *Vulcan*, forge a sharpening, thou art so lumpish.

*Trist.* He has already spoild  
His eyes with prying on Geneva prints,  
And small dutch Characters : his watching makes him  
Looke like a grand-child of old *Errapaters*,  
Some leane Astronomer, who to get ten shillings,  
For that's a large price for an Almanacke,  
Has wasted himselfe to the bignesse of his *Jacobs Raffe*,  
Which is so limber, 't cannot stand to take height of *Venus* rising.

*Thoro.* He sayes truth : besides your study has attain'd already,  
Learning enough to informe your minde the knowledge  
Of arts fit for a gentleman, wert not better  
For you my sprightfull senior to advance  
Your bever with a barband of the last  
Edition in the Court, among the noblest  
Yourhes of our nation, then to walke like *Faustus*,  
Or some high German conjurer, in a cap  
Fit for a Coster-monger, to weare your purl  
Or cut worke, band then this small snip of lining  
That's proper only for *Tam Thum* : or some of queen Mabs gen-  
tlemen authors.

*Trist.* This Cassocke were a pretty garment for a fortuneteller.

*Thoro.* And this cloake of tinder comely for a ballad-seller,  
Life sir, you are borne here to an ample fortune,  
Your father absent knowes not how you've altered  
Your disposition : I must reclayme it,  
Thou shalt with me and court the beauteous *Clare*  
Reserv'd for thee, a purpose ith' meane time,  
Our chiefe companions, shall be wits more pure,  
Then your quicke sophisters, or sic logicians,  
Wee'l talke of the bright beauties of the age,  
Girles whose each looke deserves to be a theme  
For all the nimble poets, two dayes practise

*Wit in a Constable.*

In our brave arts will teach thee to forget  
Philosophy as fruitlesse and abjure

All other Ethicks, but what's usd amongst us, as most erronious,

*Hold.* Well You shall perswade me, Ile be an errant asse, or any  
For thy like coz, but shall we have such wenches (thing

As are at Cambridge, handsome as peg Larkin.

*Thoro.* O farre before her, cosen thou shalt read

*Arcins* Politicks, and *Ovds* Art,

Shall be new read, thee and wee will refine

Thy Academicke wit with bowles of wine. (diately.

*Hold.* *Tristram* shall toth' Colledge and sell my bookes imme-

*Thoro.* Speake like the son of *Phobus* and my cosen.

*Trist.* My studious master.

*Thoro.* Sell thy Dictionary.

*Hold.* Ile not keepe a prayer booke.

*Thoro.* They are out of fashion.

(be sure

*Hold.* Nor a Calender, to looke the age oth' Moone in, *Trist.*

You burne *Greens* groats worth of wit; I scorne to keepe

The name of wit about me. (which

*Trist.* Tis confest sir, but for the numerous Rhemes of paper,

Are pil'd up in your study, give them mee,

I have a brother in law ith' towne's a cooke,

Ile give them him to put under his bake-meates.

*Hold.* Take them: I will not leave a pen within my lodging,

I will forget to write, or set my hand to any thing.

*Thoro.* Unlesse 't be to a bond.

*Hold.* Ile goe put this blest designe in execution,

Cosen anon ile meet you at your chamber.

*Thoro.* What in that reverend shape? the gentleman

That I converse with, will believe thee some Itinerant

Scholler, have thee whipt by th' statute. (into the buttries.

*Hold.* I would be loath, now I am past a fresh man to bee had

*Thoro.* Still them termes? study to forget them, Ile send my

Man to you with a new suite of mine I never wore yet,

Be sure to put it on right, you mere Schollers

Know no degree of garment above Serge,

Or Satanisco: tie your band-strings neatly

And doe not eat the buttons off, put not

*Wit in a Constable.*

Your Cuffs both on one hand; twill tax your judgement  
Of new inventing fashions when accoustred,  
Come to my chamber, and Ile furnish you  
With language fit to accost your mistress.

*Held.* Rare, I've got more learning from him in halfe an houre,  
Then in a whole lifes practise out of bookes.  
Follow me *Tristram*, farewell deare cosen. *Ex. Held. Trist.*

*Thoro.* How I could laugh now, were my spleen large enough: a  
Hundred such lame stupid Ideots were enough, if marry'd,  
To precise Burgers daughters to replenish  
The city with a race of fooles, and root  
The stocke of knaves quite out of it, he loves bookes:  
Not that he has a scruple more of learning  
Then will suffice him to say grace, but like  
Some piteous cowards, who are oft thought valiant  
For keeping store of weapons in their chambers,  
He loves to be esteem'd a doctor by

His volumnes; but I shall fit his schollership: whose these?  
*Alderman Covers*, *Formall*, byth' proportion: *Ent. Formall*  
That rib of mans flesh should be *Clare*, dost heare *and Clare.*  
My honest Cadis garters: who for care

And close attendance on thy charge deserves (vayl'd damsell?)  
To be grand porter to the great Turkes *Seraglio*: how hight that  
*Form.* She has been at Britains bourse a buying pins & need le  
To worke a night-cap for my master sir. (*Covers*)

*Thoro.* Pox upon him, is not her name *Clare*, niece to Alderman  
*For.* Her father was a country Squire of large renew and  
her mother.

*Thoro.* I shall be forc'd to heare him blaze her pedigree,  
Ide beat him, but that clubs and paring shovells oth' city  
Would be so busie abou my cares: they'd spoyle  
My hearing two months after. Gentle Lady  
Pardon my error if I doe mistake, are not you mistress *Clare*?

*Clar.* *Formall* at last, would have resolv'd you, and I held my  
Peace of purpose, cause I knew his slow discovery would vex  
Your nimble patience

*Tho.* You are a Gipsie, but does thy unkles honour hold of wed-  
His daughter to sir *Timothy*.

*Clar.*



*Wit in a Constable.*

*Clar.* Yes, or to young monsieur *Holdsfast* whom he sayes is  
Learned enough to make Cheap-side a Colledge,  
And all the City a new Academy, but have you  
*Thoro* good perform'd what I advis'd you to?

*Thoro.* Yes, my girle: good *Formall* use thy motion to convey  
Thy eare a little farther off, there's mony  
To buy thee a new payre of garters: *Clar.*  
Thou shalt no more behold me in the garbe  
And noble ornament I us'd to weare, my fashion shall be altred.

*Clar.* To the schoolers,  
Young *Holdsfasts* likenesse.

(hat transform'd

*Thoro.* O by all meanes girle; thou shalt behold this comely  
To frugall brim, and steeple crowne, this band  
Of faire extent chang'd to a moderne cut,  
Narrower then a precisians: all this gay  
And gawdy silke I will convert to Serge  
Of limber length: like some spruce student (newly  
Exalted for saying grace well, to be fellow  
Oth' Colledge he had studied) I will  
Salute thy reverent Uncles spectacles,  
And without feare of his gold chaine, ile woe thee  
In metaphores and tropes Scholastick till  
The doting Senator with a liberall hand give  
Thee his dainty darling to become my spouse inseparable.

*Clar.* This suites well with my directions.

*Thoro.* True girle true, farewell *Clar.*  
I kisse thy white hand: Sir resume your charge,  
I've done my errand: let not your old Sir *Amias*,  
Know of this conference, if you doe, that twill  
Of spinners thred, on which your life depends  
Shall be shorne off like a horse mane. Farewell.

*Exe. (Clar. &  
Formall.*

*Form.* Mans life indeed is but a thred, good day sir. *Ent. Va-  
Thor.* Attend your charge friend, *Valentine*, Sir *Timothy*, *Leontine*  
You'r well incountred, may I inquire the affaire & Sir *Timothy*.  
Which happily has brought you up roth' City?

*Thoro.* May I know it? is't not to purchase a Monopoly  
For Salt and Herrings? for state businesse,  
Unlessse it be to see the great new ship,

Or

*Wit in a Constable.*

Or *Lincolns Inne* fields built : I'me sure you none here.

*Tim.* Very right sir.

*Thor.* But for thee; my noble man of merit, thou art welcome,  
Weel be as kind to one another boy,  
And witty as brisque poets in their wine,  
Weel court the blackebrowd beauties of the time, (shed  
And have by them the height of our desires: with ease accompli-

*Val.* Noble *Thorowgood*,

Did I not owne you by the name of friend,  
Already these indearments would ingage me to beg that title.

*Tim.* Very right, and me too. *Thor.* You sir, you've reason,  
I know you for the most Egregious knight  
In all the country,

*Tim.* Very right. I am indeed esteem'd so.

*Thor.* One that live on Onions and Corne-fallets.

*Tim.* Right agen,  
Sure he can conjure, I had one to my breakefast.

*Thor.* Nay no Herald

Can better blase your pedigree. I've heard  
Your father my most worthy knight, was one  
That died a knave to leave you so.

*Tim.* Passing right still.

*Thor.* And pray right witty, and right honor'd sir,  
What may your businesse seeme to be ith' city.  
Are you come up to learne new fashions?

*Tim.* Exceeding right agen.

*Thor.* To change this ancient garment to a new one  
Of a more spruce edition.

*Val.* Yes, but before,

For I am privie unto all's intentions,  
He means to see and court his mistris.

*Thor.* Who's that? my doughty Impe of spur and sword,  
Some faire *Dulcinea de Toboso*.

*Val.* No, tis *Grace*, daughter to Alderman *Cover*.

*Thor.* I doe commend thee my deare *Don*, and will  
Be thy assistant, goe and see thy horse drest,  
And then approach my chamber.

*Tim.* Very right, I kisse your fingers ends.

*Ex. Timothy.*

*Thor.*

*Wit in a Constable.*

*Thor.* Doe you, *Valentine*, know  
The Lady he intends to Court.

*Val.* Onely by report,  
Which speakes her most accomplish'd.

*Thor.* Oh she'll make  
An excellent Ass'e of him : she has a wit  
More sharpe and piercing than a Waspes sting, she speaks  
All fire ; each word is able to burne up  
A thousand such poore Mushromes : had her mother  
Not beene held honest, I should have believ'd  
She'd bin some Courtiers By-blow, or that some  
Quicke Poet got her.

*Val.* How's her feature ?

*Thor.* Rare, past expression, singular, her eyes  
The very spears of love, her cheeks his throne,  
Her lips his paradise, and then her minde  
Is farre more excellent than her shape.

*Val.* You give her a brave Character ; is't possible  
To have a sight of her ?

*Tho.* Yes, by my means, scarce otherwise wilt thou have her ;  
Speake but a syllable, 't shall be perform'd  
As sure as if *Don Hymen*, in his robes  
Had ratifi'd the contract.

*Val.* You are merry sir,

*Thor.* When didst thou know me otherwise : yet now  
In tober sadnesse friend, couldst thou affect  
A woman, as there's few of them worth loving,  
Thou canst not make a nobler choise : He bring thee  
Onto the skirmish, but if thou retreat,  
Beat backe by th' hot Artillery of her wit,  
Which will play fast upon thee : maist thou live  
To be enamour'd on some stale Hay, or Matron  
Of fourescore, that may congeale thee to a frost  
Sooner than forty winters : or be wed  
To an insatiate Chamber-maid.

*Val.* Defend me  
From thy last curse ; feare not my valour.

C

*Thor.*

*Wit in a Constable.*

*Ther.* This foole shall serve both her and us for sport :  
Lets to our taske ; and if our project hit,  
He sweare all fortune is compris'd in wit.

*Exeunt.*

*Explicit Actus primus.*

---

## Actus secundus. Scena prima.

*Covet, Clara, Maudlin.*

*Cov.* **Y**ou will provoke me.

*Clar.* No matter :

Although you be my uncle, and so nature  
Binds me to observe you, ile not be oblig'd  
To what the phlegmaticke humour of your age  
Strives to enforce upon me : I was borne  
Free, an inheritrice to an ample fortune,  
Of which you doe pervert the use, and trust me,  
He be no longer tame and suffer it.

*Cov.* Suffer what ? you're us'd

Too well : if you complaine of this, I shall  
Study to be more harsh.

*Clar.* Doe ; you shall not, as you had wont,  
Thinke to attire me in blacke Grogam,  
Daub'd o're with Sattin lace, as if I were  
Daughter, and heire apparent to a Tayler,  
Who from the holiday Gownes of sixe neat fish-wives  
Had stole the remnants made the thrifty garment.  
Nor shal you sir (as tis a frequent custome,  
Cause you're a worthy Alderman of a Ward)  
Feed me with Custard, and perpetuall White-broth,  
Sent from the Lord Majors, or the Shriefes feast,

And



*Wit in a Constable.*

And here preserv'd ten dayes, (as twere in pickle)  
Till a new dinner from the common hall  
Supply the large defect.

*Cov.* You'll leave this language?

*Clar.* Leave to use me so then:

Y'ave made my selfe, your daughter, and my woman,  
Sup with a penyworth of Lettice, under  
Pretence 'twould make us sleep well: your full morsells  
(Had not the vertue of Clay wall, and Oatmeale  
Preserv'd my maid) ere this she'd bin shrunk up  
Toth' bignesse of a Squirrill.

*Maid.* Any Dwarf  
might without stretching his small fingers, have  
Spand me about the waste,

*Clar.* Nor shall you,  
(As sure tis your intention) marry me  
To th' *quondam* fore-man of your shop, (exalted  
To be your Cash-keeper) a limber fellow,  
Fit onely for deare *Nan*, his schoole-fellow,  
A Grocers daughter, borne in *Bread-street*, with  
Whom he has used to goe to *Pimblico*,  
And spend ten groats in Cakes and Christian Ale,  
And by the way has courted her with fragments,  
Stoln from the learned Legends of Knights Errants,  
Or from the glory of her fathers trade,  
The Knight o'the Burning Pestle.

*Cov.* Sure the Devill  
Has entred her ith' likenesse of an Ecce,  
Her tongue's so slippery: Minion——

*Clar.* Ile not be frighted  
As are your Prentises, with Little ease,  
Or shewing them the Beadle. In plain termes,  
I doe not meane to incorporate with a Salter,  
Or any of those thriving trades, to have  
My shooes lickt o're each saturday night  
Byth' under prentise; they shine so brightly  
With foot and kitching-stuffe, that I next morning  
May spare my glasse, and dresse my head by their

*Wit in a Constable.*

Greasier reflection: yet let me tell you,  
I must be marry'd instantly a virgin:  
Of my full age, setting aside all nicenesse  
May justly claime a husband.

*Cov.* Have but patience, ile wed thee to a Knight.

*Clare.* What is hee, one oth' Post fir, or some such  
As was in the old famous Ballad mention'd:  
He that has forty pounds *per annum*, by  
Which Charter I should be undutifull,  
And take the wall of my ag'd Grandame: No,  
He have a Courtly gentleman, whose wit  
Shall equall his estate, and that so large,  
As't shall afford me a sufficient joynture.

*Cov.* This Knight shall do't, or if you like not him,  
What say you to Sir *Geffery Holdfast's* sonne,  
The famous Schollar?

*Clare.* If he be a Parson;  
And I his wife, I sure shall make my friends  
Lucky to horse-flesh: No, I will have one  
That shall maintaine my Coach, and foure faire horses:  
Not such thin jades, nor such a crazy Chariot,  
As i've seene us'd by Citizens to convey  
Their wives with leasure to their Country houses,  
(For feare the late Plum-pudding they had eaten  
Fryed to their Breakfast, should with too much jogging  
Broyle on their queasie stomachs) One that shall  
Maintaine me a Sedan, and two strong varlets,  
That so I may not need the Common men Mules,  
With their wood-Litters, with nineteene at end of them,  
The usuall shelters, which the Gallants carry  
Their wenches to their Chambers in: In brieft,  
If you can find me any where a husband  
That I can like, I will allow your choyse;  
If not, ile take my owne; so good day to you.  
Pray meditate upon it.

*Ex. Clare, Maud.*

*Cov.* This is the maddest wench: would I were rid of her,  
She vexes me more than her Portion's worth;  
But if she stoope not to my Country Knight,

*Wit in a Constable.*

Sir *Timothy Shallow-wit*, or to young *Holdfast*,  
(Whom I had rather marry to my daughter)  
She shall ha grasing.

*Enter Formall.*

*For.* Sir, there are a brace of gentlemen without,  
Desire admittance to you.

*Cov.* Let them enter.

*For.* I shall denote your pleasure.

*Ex. For.*

*Cov.* Some young heires,  
To borrow money upon Morgages.

*Enter Holdfast, Brave, Trisfram.*

*Hol.* I shall observe my Cosens rule, nere fear me.

*Cov.* Save you sir.

*Hol.* You do not think me damn'd sir, you bestow  
That salutation on me.

*Cov.* Good sir no.

Whom would you speake with here?

*Hol.* Sir, my discourse  
Poynts at one Alderman *Covet*.

*Cov.* I am the party.

*Hol.* Good Mr. *Covet*, I covet your acquaintance:  
I understand you have a daughter is  
Of most unknowne perfections.

*Cov.* She is as heaven made her.

*Hol.* She goes naked then,  
The Tailer has no hand in her; may I see her?

*Cov.* I must desire your name first.

*Hol.* My name is *Holdfast*.

*Cov.* Sonne to sir *Geff. Holdfast*.

*Hol.* His proper sonne and heire, and I am come  
To see your Daughter and your Neece.

*Cov.* Came you from Cambridge lately.

*Hol.* I come from Cambridge:

What do you see in these my looks, should make you  
Judge me such a *Coxcombe*.

*Wit in a Constable.*

*Cov.* Your father writ me word, his son that should  
Come up to see my Daughter and my Neece,  
Was a rare schollar, wholly given to's bookes.

*Hold.* My father was an arrant asse for's labour,  
I ne're read book in all my life, except  
The Counter scuffle, or the merry Gossips,  
Raynard the Foxe, Tom Thumbe, or Gargan tua,  
And those i've quite forgotten : I a schollar !  
He lyes in's throat that told you so.

*Trist.* On my Conscience  
You may believe him : he scarce ere saw booke,  
Vnlesse the Chronicle in an iron Chaine,  
In's fathers Hall : for learning sir, except  
What's in a Horse, a Hawke, or hownd, he knowes not  
How to expound your meaning.

*Cov.* I mar'le sir *Geff.* knowing my aversion  
From any of these courses, should bring up  
His sonne to all of them : nay, write me word,  
Knowing my love to learning, he had him  
A schollar purposely : pray sir resolve me,  
Are you sir *Gefferies* sonne ?

*Hold.* I am a Bastard else.

*Cov.* Sir *Gefferies* sonne of *Eppinge* ?

*Hold.* Yes, of *Eppinge*,

One that will venture five hundred pounds upon his horse,  
Soone as the proudest hee that lives in *London*,  
Ile play my Crop-care 'gainst my Lord Majors Steed,  
And all his furniture : I doe intend  
To scoure *Hide Parke* this summer. *Trist.* didst give him  
His Oates this morning ? Shall I see your daughter.  
Did he drink's water hastily ? Your Neece  
I'de be acquainted with.

*Cov.* Sir, you must pardon me, you're not the man  
I tooke you for.

*Hold.* You did not take me for an Asse I hope.

*Cov.* O by no meanes, but they cannot be seene  
Conveniently this morning : another time,  
At your best leasure, I shall not deny you.

Please



*It is in a Constable.*

Please you walke in, and taste our Beere ?

*Hold.* I know 'tis but oth' fixes ; and I hate  
Liquor of that complexion : pray commend me  
To both my sweet-hearts. *Trisfram* come lets backe,  
And, as my Cosen sayes, drinke lusty sacke.

*Exeunt Holdfast and Trisfram.*

*Cov.* There's some deceite in this, perhaps some gallant,  
Knowing my purpose with Sir *Geffery Holdfast*,  
Has tane his name upon him : ile dispatch  
A messenger straight to him : whom have we here ?

*Enter Thoroug. and Formall.*

*Form.* Sir, that's the Alderman my Master.

*Thor:* Is this the venerable Man, to whom  
This goodly Mansion is impropriate :  
I should negotiate with his reverence  
About authentick businesse.

*Cov:* This rather  
Should be sir *Geff.* sonne, his words and habit  
Speake him most learned. I'me the person, pray  
Let me be bold, to crave your name.

*Thor.* My appellation or pronomén, as  
(It is tearm'd by the *Latins*) is *hight Ieremie*,  
But my Cognomen, as the English gather,  
Is called *Holdfast*.

*Cov.* This is he certainly ; are you, I pray  
Sir *Gefferies* sonne of *Eppinge* ?

*Thor.* The Nominalls, the Thomists, all the sects  
Of old and moderne Schoole-men, doe oblige me ;  
To pay to that Sir *Geffery* fillial duty.

*Cov.* I'me glad to heare it, tother was some varlet,  
I shall finde out and punish : Sir, y'are welcome ;  
I gesse your businesse ; tis about a match,  
Or with my Neece, or Daughter : which you like,  
Shall be at your dispose : if not, your businesse.

*Thor.* My businesse is of procreation, or as  
The Civill Lawyers learnedly doe paraphrase,

Is

*Wit in a Constable.*

Is of concomitance, Cohabitation,  
Or what you please to terme it.

*Cov.* How am I blest, that this rare schollar shall  
Be match'd into my family? Within there;  
Neece, Daughter, both come hither.

*Thor.* One at once sit,  
I will satisfie; the Canon does prohibit  
Us Polygamy.

*Enter Clara, Gray.*

*Cov.* Sir, this is my onely daughter, this my neece,  
Pray know them better.

*Thor.* Faire types, nay Orbs of beauty, I salute you,  
Each in his proper altitude.

*Grat.* Heyday, this is some Fortune-teller.

*Clare.* Tis *Thorowgood*, you must not seeme to know him.

*Cov.* Daughter and Neece, this is a gentleman,  
My care has pick'd out, as a most fit husband  
For one of you; which he can soonest fancy,  
Heare him but speake, and he will put you downe  
Ten Universities, and Jnnes of Court,  
In twentie syllables. Good Mr. *Holdfast*  
Speake learnedly to th' wenches; though I say t,  
They have both good capacities.

*Thor.* Most rubicund, stelliferous splendant Ladyes,  
The ocular faculties, by which the beames  
Of love are darted into every soule,  
Or humane essence, have into my breast  
Convey'd this Ladies lustre: and I can  
Admire no other object; therefore beauty  
Your pardon, if I onely doe addresse  
In termes Scholasticke, and in Metaphors  
My phrase to her.

*Grat.* I shall not  
Envy my Cosens happinesse.

*Thor.* Y'are full of Candor;  
If you will love me Lady, ile approach your cares,  
Not in a garbe Domesticke, or termes vulgar,

But

*Wit in a Constable*

But hourly change my language, court you no w,  
In the *Chaldean*, or *Arabicke* tongues,  
Expound the *Talmud* to you, and the *Rabbines*,  
Then read the Dialect of the *Alanits*,  
Or *Ezion Gebor*, which the people use  
Five leagues beyond the Sun-rising, instead  
Of pages to attend you, I will bring  
Sects of Philosophers and quicint Logicians,  
Weel Procreat by learned art, and I  
Will generate new broods of Schollers on you,  
Which shall defend opinions far more various  
Then all the Sectaries of Amsterdam  
Have ever vented.

*Covet*. Learned, learned young man,  
How happy am I in thee?

*Thor*. Doe but love,  
He call the Muses from the sacred hill  
To Enucleat your beauty: I my selfe  
(After in loftier numbers I have sung  
Your fam'd Encomiums) will convert to poet,  
And for your sake He write the city annals,  
In famous meter which shall far surpass  
Sir *Guy* of *Warwicks* history: or *John Stows* upon  
The custard with the foure and twenty Nooks  
At my Lord *Majors* feast. *Cov*. How am I ravisht?

*Thor*. Whose brave show hereafter  
Shall be no more set forth with stalking pageants,  
Nor children ride for angels nor lowd actors  
Pronounce bold speeches; I will teach his Hench-  
Serjants and trumpeters to stand five mo (boyes)  
The city all that charges: Nay He make a new  
Found engin, which without fire shall keepe his  
Whitebroath warm til his return from *Westminster*  
Nor shall the Aldermens daughters, who have  
Dreamt at least six nights before of guilded  
Marchpane, forfeit their serious longing: He have  
Horses with their Saint *Georges* on them, that shall gallop  
Into their handkerchers.

*Wit in a Constable.*

*Clar.* You promise wonders.

*Covet.* Hold your tongue, bees able  
To performe more by's learning.

*Thor.* The crosse  
And stander in Cheape-side I will convert  
To *Hercules* pillars: and the little conduit  
That weepes in lamentation for the Church,  
Remov'd that did leane on, it shall be still  
Like the great tun at *Heidleberge* fill'd with wine,  
And alwayes running, that the prentises  
Shall not on Sundayes need to frequent *Taverns*,  
And forfeit their indentures.

*Covet.* Still more miraculous.

*Thor.* The great conduit  
Shall be a maze of sacke, and *Smithfield*  
A *Romish* Cirque or *Grecian* Hippodrom,  
My Lord *Maiors* gennet shall not die without  
An *Elegy*, nor any cittizen breake,  
But have a dolefull ditty writ upon him.

*Val.* Save you gentlemen.

*Covet.* Noble sir *Timothy*, and your friend both  
Welcome, this is my neice, & that my daughter, pray  
Be pleas'd to know them, Sir honor me to walke,  
I'de have some private conference with you,  
The house sir *Timothy* is at your command.

*Grace.* Cosen what would these gentlemen?

*Clare.* Truth I know not,

I he venture my discretion to his nose there,  
And that appeares a rich one, they are two  
Country Idots whom thy father would  
Put upon us for husbands.

*Grace.* Very likely,  
Pray gentlemen your business.

*Tim.* Speak for me *Katharine*.

*Val.* Ladies wee'r come to see you, fame does give  
You the attribure of faire and witty.

*Clare.* Yet our wits you see sir will not serve to keepe  
Foolles from our company.

*Tim.*



*Wit in a Constable.*

*Tim.* Very right yfaith.

*Val.* That tartnesse

Becomes you prettily, and might serve to fright  
Young linnen-drapers or some millaner  
That does with gloves and bracelets stolne from's  
Master court you, a haberdasher would have shak'd  
His blocke-head (as if he had beene trying a Dutch  
Felt out) and with a shrug departed; but we are  
Gentlemen Ladies, and no city foremen  
That never dare be ventrous on a beauty,  
Unlesse when wenches take them up at playes  
To intice them at the next licentious Taverne  
To spend a supper on them, we are creatures  
Deserve you at your best and noblest value,  
And so expect you'll use us.

*Tim.* Very right, this is

A countrey gentleman my neighbor I,  
A trusty and coragious country knight.

*Clare.* I doe believe you sir, your face does tel me,  
You'r one that feed on bacon and bagpudding,  
Your nose by its complexion does betray  
Your frequent drinking country Ale with lant in't,  
Have you no hobnays in your boots, driven in  
To save the precious leather from the stones  
That pave the streets of Lohidon.

*Grace.* Is not sir your  
Cloake new turn'd, the aged three pil'd velvet  
Was not your grandams peticoate this jerkin  
Made by your grandfure at his first translation  
From Clowne to Gentleman, and since reserv'd  
An heire long to the family, and this sword  
The parish weapon?

*Tim.* Very right agen.

*Clare.* Now for you sir.

Who of two fooles doe yet appeare the wisest,  
Can your ingenious noddle thinke that we  
Bred in the various pleasures of the city,  
Would for your sake turne beasts and graze ith' country,

*Wit in a Constable.*

We cannot milke, make wholsome cheefe, nor butter,  
And sell it at next market and lay up  
Out of the precious Treasurie as much coyne  
In thred bare groates, mill-fispences, and pence,  
As will suffice to finde the house in Candles  
And Sope a twelvemonth after.

*Grace.* Nor can wee  
Spin our owne smockes out of the flax which growes  
Behind your Dovehouse, nor, nor card the wooll  
Must make us petticoates things (to say truth)  
Not worth the taking up.

*Val.* They've Magicke in their tongues  
They have so daunted me, I thinke I shall  
Turne foole and get me them without reply.

*Clare.* All the company,  
We can enjoy there is each day to walke  
To the next farmers wife, whose whole discourse  
Is what price Barly beares, how her husband  
Sould his last yoke of Oxen in other meetings  
We cannot have, except it be at Churchales,  
When the sweet bag-pipe does draw forth the  
Damsells to frisque about the May-poles, or at  
Weddings, where the best cheare is, wholsome  
Stewd broth made of legs of porke and turnips.

*Grace.* Yes, at Christnings, where the good  
Wives, stead of burnt Wine and Comfets  
Drinke healths to the memory of all Christian soules  
In Ale, scarce three houres old, eat cakes more tough  
Then glew or farthing gingerbread then talk  
Of the last Blasing Starre, or some new monster  
Then drinke, and cry heaven bleesse us from the Spaniard,  
While the learn'd Vicars wife expounds the Ballad  
Of 'twas a Ladies daughter in Paris properly,  
And so breakes up the wise assembly.

*Val.* And you  
That are the precious paragons of the City,  
Who scorne these harmelesse sports: can have your meetings  
At Islington, and Green Goope faire, and fir

*Wit in a Constable.*

A zealous glasse of Wine till the parch'd floor  
Be moistned with your virgin dew, then prattle  
How that you dreamt last night that *John the Mercer*,  
Or *Tom the Drapers man* at *London-stone*  
Was in your bed, and what sweet work he made there.

*Tim.* Very right, and kis'd you oftner  
Then ere the good man did his Cow, and hug'd the  
As the Divell hug'd the Witch, that's right now.

*Val.* When you'r married  
(For that you will be, or else run away  
With Costermongers, Mountebanks, or Taylors)  
Your husbands are more subject to you then  
Their bondmen are, whom by profane expence  
You breake beyond redemption from the Indiet; this  
Straights, or Barbary, see them lodged in Ludgate  
And then turne pricking semsters, till that trade  
Fayling, you take your selves (as to the last refuge)  
To the old occupation; till the Marshall  
Carry you to Bridewell, of which you'r free;  
Even by your fathers charters that have beene  
Sometimes the masters of it, there Ile leave you,  
So farewell wildecats.

*Tim.* Very right as I am a gentleman.

*Grace.* I like him for it well *Clare*, *John the Mercer*  
Or none shall be my husband.

*Enter Thoren good.*

*Thor.* helpe me to laugh good wenches. I haue talk'd  
Thy Unkle *Clare* into so free an humour,  
That hees resolv'd straight to take forth the liberties  
And marry us ith' morning.

*Clare.* What od fellow's this?  
Know you him Cosen *Grace*.

*Thor.* Prethee good wit noe more, we've overcome  
All forraigne enemies and tis possi-  
To war among our selves.

*Grace.* This is the pedant  
My father brought to mocke us, good chine stufte,  
Get thee home to thy parish,  
And instruct

*Wit in a Constable.*

Thy people wholesome Doctrine, for us,  
We have no zeale to learne.

*Thor.* Life they'll perswade me out of my selfe,

*Clare, Grace,* know you not me, not *Thorowgood.*

*Amb. Thorowgood,* pray put your trickes on some body,

More easie to be wrought on, *Thorowgood, Ha, ha, ha.*

*Exe.*

*Thor.* What should those wenchers meane, the five and sixeares

Cannot resolve this myltery: they know me

Better then I can know my selfe: 'twas the

Advis'd me to this habit to deceive

Her uncles prying eyes, and why then

Should they abuse me thus? the rest were made

But fooles in Quarto, but I finde my selfe

An asse in Folio: the away, and if

*I quit them not, with an abuse as fine,*

*He say there is no quickning spirit in wine.*

*Exit.*

*Explicit Actus Secundus.*

*Actus Tertius, Scena prima.*

*Enter Thorowgood, Valentino Knowell.*

*Know.* **A**RE they so witty thyf thou?

*Val.* You'd best try  
The acutenesse of their intellects.

*Thor.* You may endeavor

With the large talent of your masculine wit

To exceed their female sharpnesse you shall finde,

Though you firme and stiffe in your defence,

These city lasses able to take downe

Your most couragious fury: pray endeavour't.

*Know.* That gentleman, were to usurpe your presence,

I finde no inclination, yet I thanke you,

To



*Wit in a Constable.*

To rest a foole upon record as you doe.

*Val.* How's that, my impe of understanding?

*Know.* By being so egregiously abus'd  
By two poore City infants, things that never  
Have heard wit nam'd, unlesse 'twas when their father  
Has cal'd his *Formall* foreman, witty varlet,  
For cheating handsomely, had they been some  
Illustrious dames, the glory of *Chape-side*,  
Stars of the City, that are daily haunted  
By this great Lord that courtly kisse their gossips,  
It had beene possible their conversation  
Might have instild into them so much language  
And wit sufficient to withstand the assaults  
Of some young *Innes* courtman.

*Thor.* Yes, who never  
Had mooted in the hall or seen the revels  
Kept in the house at Christmas.

*Know.* Some such gamster might have  
Come oft with cred it, though hee'd ventur'd  
His whole estate of wit on them and lost it,  
But you the rookes wth' age to be ored one  
At your owne game by ciry girls.

*Val.* Thou art an asse,  
A very coxcomb, there are girles ith' City  
Able to oredoe at their owne game a hundred  
Such feeble fellows as thy selfe, but *Thoren good*,  
Leaving this infidell to his mis-beliefe,  
Are you resolved that I shall undertake  
The new designe we plotted?

*Thor.* With what speed  
Can be convenient, sir *Timothy*  
Shall be our instrument.

*Know.* If there be wit in't,  
Honour me to assist you.

*Thor.* A revenge  
Upon these peevish wenches, one of them  
Loves me intirely, nay has vow'd me a marriage,  
And did advise me to assume this shape,

To

*Who's the Constable?*

To cheat her uncle.

*Val.* And for the other;  
By many a shrowd cast of her eye upon me,  
I doe suspect for all her quaint dissembling,  
She's taken with my good parts.

*Thor.* Thy face I must confesse,  
Is full of choyce allurements, see there maid,  
How fares it with your witty mistress,  
My gallant type of beauty, is she stomach;  
Come down, I assure you are furnish'd  
With some excuse or lamentable epistle,  
To reconcile me to them.

*Mand.* Sir I am  
As ignorant of the interpretation of your words,  
As of your person.

*Thor.* Shee not know me neither?  
*Mand.* But if there be one *Valentine* among you,  
A well accomplish'd gentleman,

*Val.* That's I, that's I.  
*Mand.* Then sir, if you have any business  
I would require your privacy some minutes.

*Val.* Weel be as private as thou wilt, my girl;  
Your patience gentlewoman.

*Know.* I wonder *Thor* what business  
She can have with him.

*Thor.* Heel declare it,  
See they are parting.

*Val.* Tel them Ile advise ont.  
*Mand.* You will be speedy.

*Val.* Yes, yes, nere doubt my haste, say me their servant.  
*Thor.* The businessse *Valentine*.

*Val.* Dost not thou know it,  
Euen by instinct?

*Know.* We cannot prophecy.  
*Val.* Thou art a foole then,

Does not the harmony of my good parts  
Speake me the conqueror of all beauties *Thor* good,  
The wenches are on fire for me.

*Thor.*

*Wit in a Constable.*

*Tho.* Their bloods  
Are alwayes hot ith' Dogdayes : but good *Valentine*  
Beferious, did their maid bring newes of love  
From either of them?

*Val.* From both, from both, now wert for the statute,  
That Bigamy my tender conscience  
Would not much be oppres'd to have two wives,  
But one of them thy Pinnace, thou shalt man her :  
But J delay too long, I must goe meete them ;  
I long to be a kissing, pray heaven their breath  
Smell not of Marmalade, 'twill turne my stomacke.

*Tho.* You'll practice our designs I hope.

*Val.* Methodically : farewell boyes.

*Ex. Val.*

*Tho.* Pray be you Sir *Timothy*, know his entrance :  
Tis such another mad-cap my Scene is.

*Enter Holdfast.*

*Hold.* Nay, come forward Land lord Spoild else. *Trisf. Busf.*  
Tis my Cosen lodgings, pray be bold in't,  
As is my Chamber. Cosen this is a Constable.

*Tho.* He comes not with a warrant.

*Hold.* No, Ile warrant you, I  
Brought him Sir to see you ; he's a wit,  
A very wit, or as the modernes terme it,  
A sparke, a meere sparke, such a one as I am,  
Since I left off those idle toyes cald books,  
He'll take Tobacco too, and with a grace  
Spit ith' rub'd chamber, though his testy wife,  
Crye sic upon him : he's a very sparke,  
and worthy your acquaintance.

*Trisf.* Come forward sir, you stand as if you'd cosen'd  
One of them with bad linnen ; pray advance,  
My Master is your Leader.

*Busf.* Save you gentlemen.

*Tho.* Y'are very welcome Sir, my Cosen speaks you  
A Citizen of ranke.

*Know.* That you beare office  
Of honour in your parish.

*Tho.* That y'are witty,

*He is a Constable.*

Or as he sayes a sparke.

*Know.* Nay, a good fellow.

*Bus.* Tis granted gentlemen,  
This is my Character, I am by trade

A Linnen Draper.

*Tho.* Would trust me

For forty ells of Holland.

*Bus.* Ha, how's that fir? I have more wit I thanke you a cause you sceme

A Gentleman of quality, I care not

To venture as much Cambric as shall make

Your Crush a gorget, but no farther, fir,

There is no wit in't: how's that Mr. Holdfast?

*Hold.* You are a sparke, still Landlord.

*Know.* Ile sweare in this he's a witty

*Bus.* Tis my humour,

My wit has hidde me long ere this

But for my wit I becom an Alderman,

And twirld a pondron chain upon the bench

With as much grace as can be for all of them

I should have fin'd for Sheriffe, but all Guild Hall

Hearing I was a wit, cry'd out at him

Twill breed an alteration in the same

To have a wit amongst them. How's that fir?

*Know.* And so you will gett more

*Tho.* And continue

It's state of wisedome still, in humble

*Hold.* Yes, and an honest one, it's say that for him

He ne're stop'd wench in's watch

*Bus.* How's that? I sceme it

I've stop't a hundred in my time: how's that fir?

You relish wit I see.

*Know.* Tis so acute,

No pallat, but with a little shall's to the Tavern

Y'are for a cup I hope?

*Bus.* For now fir,

It is my frequent use, when I have set

My watch, to view the Tavern, drinke a quart,

And



*Wit in a Constable.*

And then backe to my businesse, and there wit in't.

*Tho.* Tis granted sir: Come gentlemen, an houte  
Is our extent of time: good Mr. Constable  
It shall be yours. Cosen I have some businesse  
Concernes your knowledge, as we passe along  
I shall informe you. *Exeunt.*

*Enter Valentine, Grace, Clare, Mamullin.*

*Val.* You see I me come  
Vpon your summons.

*Clar.* Sure you mistake,  
There's none here is so fond of you to court  
Your cheap and vulgar prefence.

*Val.* Here's a Letter  
Speaks other language, you might cloath your discourse  
In the same phrase, or I shall laugh your folly  
Into a milder temper, and then leave you.

*Clar.* You'r very confident.

*Val.* No, you're too coy,  
I me now ith' humour to be tempted to  
Love any of you: take me while the fit  
Is on me, for I me sure twill not endure  
Longer than does a wealthy widdowes griefe  
For a loath'd husband: Speak, ha you a mind to me?  
Speake quickly, or for ever more hereafter  
Be sure to hold your peace, and that's a taske  
Farre worse then death to any of your sexe.

*Clar.* Her blushes does betray her, wett to me,  
He should finde other usage. Sir my Cosen,  
I know not how transported by her love,  
Above her reason, has enthrald her heart  
To your dispose. I hope sir you'r so much  
A Gentleman, you will make civill use  
Of her affection; twill be worth your care fit.  
Besides the rich endearments of her youth,  
She's Mistris of a fortune that may challenge  
A noble retribution for her love.

*Wit in a Constable:*

Weele not disturbe your conference.

*Ex. Clar. Mand.*

*Grace.* Cosen, cosen, you will not leave me thus?

*I pray let me goe sir.*

*Val.* Thus farre into my armes girle, that's the place  
Thou oughtst to rest in : you expect I warrant  
That I should court you now, and with an armie  
Of oathes, stufft with as many finicall falsehoods,  
Protest I love you : by this sight I know not,  
Tis folly to dissemble, whether or no  
I can affect thee ; yet thou seemst to weare  
That pretty harmlesse innocence in thy lookes,  
It wins my credulous thoughts to believe  
Thou maist be vertuous.

*Grace.* Sir, I hope my owne  
Too forward zeale, in tendring you my love,  
Will not in your good thoughts beget an ill  
Opinion of my modesty.

*Val.* Never feart :

That freeness more engages my just faith  
To embrace thy affection. I have scene some Ladies,  
Coy as a Voteresse below their suiters,  
Yet with a tough-backt groome, have knowne them sin  
With most libidinous appetite in private ;  
But I me as fearelesse girle, that ought amisse  
Can staine thy soule, as thou wert confident  
In setting thy most constant choise upon  
A stranger ; yet I must desire the reason  
Why you did love me ; for my owne good parts,  
Certaine they're not so attractive as to conquer  
A beautie at first sight.

*Grace.* Since I have  
Disclos'd my affection to you, (although love  
Oft times admits no reason ) ile endeavour  
To satisfie your question ; the first cause  
Moov'd me to love you, was my father.

*Val.* Hang thy father  
In's owne gold chaine ; but such another word,  
And never hope to have me ; dost thou thinke

*Wit in a Constable.*

*I*le be beholding to an eigh' ith' hundred,  
To such an empty cask as is thy father,  
(Who soon did get his wealth by the old proverb  
Of fooles have fortune) for a wife; but that  
I have some mercy in me to believe  
Thou maist be virtuous; I would not match  
With any of my squeamish Ants of London,  
For all the wealth ith' Chamber.

*Grace.* Sir, you ask'd,  
A question of me, and will not permit  
Me give a civill answer; as I said,  
My father——

*Val.* Father agen, farewell; my eares doe blister  
At the harsh sound: would thou hadst beene a Ballard,  
So thou hadst no title to his blood:  
Another father, like a whirlewind, blowes me  
Hence from thy sight for ever.

*Gra.* Pray heare me.  
Intends to match me to Sir *Timothy*  
*Shallow-wit*, a creature onely fit for scorne;  
Which to prevent, and taken with the fulnesse  
Of your true worth, I rather chuse to cast  
My reputation on your noble pity,  
Than stand the desperate hazard of my ruine.

*Val.* She loves me by this light, this is no trick.  
Now to my *Therowgoods* project: th'art a good wench,  
A harmlesse wench, and I believe a sound one,  
And I will have thee; give me thy hand: yet stay,  
Ere I doe cast my self away upon thee,  
You here shall promise Mistress, to become  
A most obedient wife, and not according  
To th' ancient tricke inherent to the City,  
Raile till you be my Master.

*Grace.* Never feare me.

*Val.* Nor shall you, when you're at my house ith' Country  
Be niggardly, or spoyle a dinner for  
Want of the tother ounce of Sugar, nor  
Repine to see me merry with my friends,

*Wit in a Constable.*

Or curse my brothers, when they join with me,  
Nor starve my servants when I am from home,  
I must be drunk sometimes too, then you must not  
Whine and cry out, were I a maid again.  
I de never marry any that does take  
This wicked Herbe Tobacco. These injunctions  
And some few hundreds made of the same nature,  
Scald and deliver'd to me by your promise,  
I may be wonne to wed thee, nay to bed thee,  
And get a race of such Heroicks children,  
As shall intice posterity to conceive  
Some good came from Cheapside. Your lip shall scale this.

*Grace.* You see your strength upon me.

*Val.* Tis my good girl: Thy father, armed with the trained bands o' the City,  
Shall never pull thee from me to confirm thee  
How much I love, ile disclose a plot  
I had to gaine thy affection.

*Grace.* Tis some good one,  
Pray let me hear it.

*Val.* You see my youth and feature will admit  
A womans Character, if I were to loath'd  
But in the habit, should I not appear  
A bouncing Mary.

*Grace.* Some such creature, but to your project.

*Val.* I have prepar'd me  
A handsome female shape, my maid without  
Has them under his cloak, and I persuaded  
Sir Timothy, in hope that I would court thee  
In his behalfe, to have present  
Here for his Neece, you shall see me.

*Grace.* Very well; but now  
This the designe is uselesse.

*Val.* By no meanes;

It must be in action, come goe in,  
And helpe to dresse me: Sir Timothy expects  
To meete me in that shape here, and besides  
In that disguise, secure I can at any time



*Wit in a Constable.*

Steale out with you, and marry you.

*Gra.* Your reason

Shall governe my obedience.

*Val.* Come let's in then.

*Enter Timothy; Cover, Formall,*

*Tim.* Tis very right that fir, but yet methinkes

A wholsome song, sung to a fine new tune,

Should not be much amisse : my boy here has one,

And Ide be very loath, although I cannot

Sing, as they say, my selfe, that she should heare

What those, I can keep, can doe, is not this right now?

*Cov.* Your pleasure shall prevaile, though to say truth,

Sonne Shallow-wit, for sonne I still shall call you,

I never lik'd a Song, unlesse the Ballad

Our famous *Danish* Prentice, or the building

Of Britaines Burse : for Musicke, lesse the Virginals;

I never car'd for any. Does but cloy

The cares, but never fills the purse sonne.

*Tim.* Very right indeed ; tis too light

For such a purpose.

*Form.* With your leave fir,

Musicke is most delightfull, and young Mistris

*Grace*, and her Cosen surely will receive it

With thankfull Equipage.

*Tim.* Honest *Formall*,

Th art in the right still ; come exalt thy voyce

My little Impe of gut and haire : My Mistris

Shall know there's something in me.

How dee you *Sings.*

Like it?

*Form.* Tis very odoriferous.

*Cov.* I shall beginne

To love it better then I have done ; tis a good boy,

A very pretty boy, and Ile reward thee.

There's a threepence for thee.

*Tim.* Very right.

Father.

*Wit in a Constable.*

Father you are too bountifull.

*Cov.* He shall take it,

Indeed he shall; tis manners to receive

Mony from your betters boy: but here's my Neece.

*Enter Clare.*

*Tim.* Very right, I had almost forgotten, pray where's mine?

*Cov.* Why, have you a Neece Sir *Timothy*?

*Tim.* Yes, yes, I've two or three, but one I sent  
Hither, to view my Mistris in a Coach  
An houre agoe at least.

Sure she is come.

*Cov.* *Clare* did you see the gentlewoman?

*Clar.* None such came hither yet Sir.

*Tim.* That's not right though,  
A poxe upon her for her paines.

*Enter Mandlin.*

*Mand.* Mrs. your Cosen does desire some conference with you.

*Cov.* *Mandlin*,  
Did there a Gentlewoman arrive here lately,  
To see my daughter?

*Mand.* There is one within,  
In busie conference with her.

*Tim.* Very right that, he's pleading for me now,  
Faure Damsell that's my Neece; pray tell her, here's  
A Knight, a simple Uncle of hers, or so, desires her  
Company. But here she comes, my Mistris with her Neece.  
Tis well done, ile give thee the tother thousand to increase  
Thy portion for't: Mistris, and how, and how do you like my  
Neece, a plaine Country girle, or so.

*Cov.* A very handsome woman, I could love her,  
Did I but know her portion. Mistris welcome.  
Whats in that house is yours?

*Grace.* Sir *Timothy*,  
You have much grac'd me by the sweet acquaintance  
Of this good gentlewoman. Pray Cosen know her;  
She's worthy your endearment.

*Clare.* I shall be proud  
To doe you service.

*Wit in a Constable:*

*Val.* I most fortunate  
To be esteem'd your creature.

*Tim.* Very right  
Shees a poore niece of mine, yet she can speake you  
May perceiue or see.

*Enter Thorensgood, Holdfast, Tristram,  
Knowell.*

*Cla.* Life Thorensgood with young  
Holdfast, pray heaven my folly  
Has not undone me.

*Thor.* You'l please to pardon  
Our rude intention sir, we have some businesse.

*Cov.* Please you declare't.

*Thor.* This gentleman and my selfe,  
Come to informe you that this sparke my Cosen,  
Is soane and heire to sir *Geffrey Holdfast*,  
And since I heare you have dispos'd your daughter  
To that good knight, I in his fathers name,  
Desire your niece should be his wife.

*Cla.* Pray Sir speake  
In your owne cause he needs no advocate.

*Cov.* I've beene abus'd,  
Is this Sir *Geffreys* son the scholler?

*Thor.* The very same sir.

*Hold.* I am the sparke sir.

*Know.* *Valentine*, ith' name *puls off his periwig.*  
Of madnesseman why in this shape?

*Thor.* *Valentine*, Ha, ha, ha.

*Tim.* Very right, my niece is *Valentine*.

*Thor.* And how ist bully, hast not found these girles  
Of a hot appetite, how often ha?

*Val.* Has my Land-lady  
Provided me a cullis, like my backe  
Does needs a swathband.

*Cov.* What meanes this gentleman? *Thor.* Nothing sir,  
But to informe you what strange things your neice,

F

And

And daughter and, may never blush he has  
Perform'd it better then your uncles Foreman  
I know he has.

*Covet.* Timor by this abuse and not be thus put up,  
Did not you say I was your Neice.

*Tim.* Very right, but it was *Valentine*.

*Know.* He has been here all night too.

*Grace.* Cosen we are basely betray'd.

*Cla.* Take courage.

*Thor.* Doe you thinke sir, my Cosen shall mixe with such  
Stale ware that keepe their gamsters in their chambers.

*Know.* Or this knight have *Valentines* revercions?

*Tim.* Very right, I scorae it.

*Thor.* Keepe them, they liewe to let up some twife  
Broken Merchant, or undone Linnen-draper, come away

*Valentine*, thou hast made a brave til-very. Farewell,  
My witty virgines, you ate payd now.

*Cov.* Ile be reveng'd for this, and it'll cost me  
Halfe my estate Formall lend post for Mr *Jeffrey*.

The whole towne shall know of this abuse:  
Ile make you fast enough.

*Explicit Actus tertius.*

## Actus Quartus, Scena prima.

*Grace, Clara, Busie, Luce.*

*Busie.* **T**hey are both sparkes, that's certaine, here  
I take them in my watch, Ile make them stoop  
Under my state of office, Mistris *Clara*,  
Though I'm a Citizen, and by my charter,  
Am not allowed much wit, as being free  
Oth Linnen-d rapers, and a man in office,

Yet



Yet if my counsell, if you please to follow it,  
Doe not revenge you on these sawcy mad caps;  
May taking up of Holland at deare rates,  
Be quite abjur'd by courtiers; and I canvis'd  
Out of authority, how's that now?

*Clare.* Master *Busie*,  
You seeme of sage discretion; and to say  
Truth, I conceive you have the stocke of wit  
Belonging to the city in your custody,  
You are the chamber of London, where that treasure  
Is hoarded up, and I doe hope you can  
Be true and secret.

*Busie.* How's that Lady?  
I were unworthy else to thrive by linnen,  
Could I not keepe smocke secrets for your uncle,  
Your father mistris *Grace*, I care not for him,  
Although he be right worshipful and an Alderman,  
As I may say to you he has no more;  
Wit then the rest oth' bench; what lies in's thumbe-ring,  
Yet I doe love you deereley for the kindnesse  
Shown to my girle here, and because you have  
Some flashes in your braines; and since you have  
Opend the case to me, ere we proceed  
To sentence, tell me seriously doe not you two  
Love *Valentine*, and *Freewit*?

*Grace.* For my owne part,  
And I dare say as much too, for my cosen,  
Their memories are as distant from our hearts,  
As civill honesty from theirs.

*Clare.* And though  
I well could like that *Freewit* for a husband,  
Yet in mere spight because he shal not have me,  
Ile wed the next man offered me.

*Busie.* How's that?  
I would my wife were dead, two comely lasses,  
Such as sometimes I light on in my warch,  
would make fit wives for such rude sparks, and t' shal  
Goe hard but I will for your sakes sweete beauties,

*Wit in a Constable.*

Number a brace of such sound cuttell to them,  
If you'll give way to it.

*Cl.* And crowne thee for

The king of witty Constables use our names,  
Or any thing to draw them forward, that  
Wee may in triumph laugh at their disgrace,  
And weel procure a patent, to continue  
Thy office to thee, during life and after  
To hire some ingenious poet that shall keepe  
Thy fame alive in a braye Epitaph  
Grav'd on thy marble.

*Enter Cover, Sir Geoffrey Holdfast, Sir Timothy going Holdfast.*

*Geff.* What varlet should that be trow?

*Cov.* Truth I know not,  
Nor can conjecture, yet I disbelieve  
Him to be truly yours, because attird  
Ith' habit and the phrase of a right Scholler,  
And for your sonne, pardon me master *Holdfast*,  
I tooke you for some lewd audacious varlet,  
That had usurpt that title.

*Hold.* I imagine  
It was some bastard of my fathers, gotten  
In youth upon his Taylors wife or Landresse,  
He has good store of them, but master Alderman  
You now conceive I me son and heire apparent  
Unto the *Holdfasts*, whosoever got me,  
That's not much matter.

*Basf.* How's that, anon before I set my watch,  
He visit you agen: meantime, pray give my  
Daughter *Luce* leave to come home, her sister  
Poore wretched, is troubled with a paine ith'  
Bottom oth' body, pricks even to her very heart;  
And I would have *Luce* goe toth' Potheccaries,  
And get some Besar stone, they say 'twill cure her.  
Farewell good Ladies, you'll be sure to come *Luce*.

*Ex. Basf.  
Geff.*

*Geff.* Are these the maidens, I promise you master  
Alderman the'r virgins of good feature, and I shall  
Be well apaid if my sonne match to either,  
Which lik'st thou best boy?

*Hold.* Both of them good father,  
Be not so troublefome, but let me take  
A view of them: Sir *Timothy* which doe you  
Like best of these two Ladies?

*Tim.* Which doe you  
Like best good Mr. *Holdfast*.

*Hold.* Yours shall be  
The choyce noble Sir *Timothy*.

*Tim.* Yours indeed,  
Magnanimous Mr. *Holdfast*.

*Hold.* On my gentility yours.

*Tim.* Yours on my knighthood.

*Cov.* Good sir *Timothy*,  
No striving, they are free for you, and for  
The staine those idle gallants put upon them,  
Twas on my credit gentlemen to keepe  
All other suitors off, in hope by that meanes  
To obtaine them for themselves.

*Tim.* Tis very likely  
That *Valentine's* a wagge.

*Cov.* Daughter and niece,  
This hopefull gentleman, and this good knight are  
By my care provided for your husbands, pray use  
Them as befits their worth, and take it  
As a fatherly admonition; either resolve  
To marry these or none.

*Cla.* Tis a hard choyce sir,  
Yet rather then our maiden-heads shall starve,  
Wee feed on this course fare, young wenches uncle,  
Are like young hungry Hawkes: they'l stoope at  
Jack-daws, when they can meet with no better prey,  
Draw neerer thou doughty knight, and thou good  
Squire oth' damfells, Uncle these yonthes are bashfull in the  
Presence of you two their grave Elders: your grim beards,

And azure notes able are to fright  
Their precise love to silence.

*Tim.* Shees ith' right,  
I me scuh a fearefull foole I cannot speake,  
If any body looke on me.

*Geff.* Let's withdraw,  
Now plye thy businesse boy.

*Clare.* So now the game  
Will begin presently: I pray you tell me  
Which of you is the valiant Rosicler,  
Dares breake his Launce on me.

*Tim.* Marry that would I  
If I durst be so bold, mine is a stiffe one,  
And will pricke sorely.

*Clare.* A fooles bable ist not?  
But come in brieft toth' purpose: is it you  
Sir knight of the ill favored face,  
That would have me for your Dulcinea?

*Tim.* Very right,  
You know my minde as well it seemes as if  
You'r in my belly.

*Grace.* So then you are sped:  
This gentleman's my comely spouse that must be,  
Twere fitting Cosen *Clare* ert be a bargaine,  
They know on what conditions they doe cast  
Themselves away upon us.

*Hold.* Twas discreetly  
Thought on, I would doe nothing rashly.

*Clare.* Marke then  
You men that will transforme your selves to  
Monsters, wretches that will become so miserable,  
You'l hang your selves: & think it a faire riddance,  
Marke what you'l come to, if you be so mad,  
So desperate mad to wed us, you must first  
Resolve like patient gulls to have your noses  
Twingd if ours chance to itch: your eares like asses  
When they grow lasie cropt, least they oreheare  
Our chamber secrets, for our recreation;

And



*Wit in a Constable.*

And least with too much ease we should grow refty,  
Weel beat you daily : while you like tame Spanells,  
Shall fawne and licke our shooc-strings.

*Grace.* Nor expect,

To get a good word from us in a twelvemonth,  
Hourly revilings and perpetuall noyses  
Shall be as favours taken that we would  
Vouchsafe to spend in such regardlesse trifles,  
Wee'l be as proud as ere our mothers were,  
When she was Lady Majoreffe, and you humble,  
As her trim hench-boyes: whatsoever servants  
You kept before, although they were your grandsires,  
You shall turne off and limmit your attendants,  
As tis the city fashion to a woman  
Butler, that shall not dare without our license,  
To let you have a penny pot of sacke  
To give a frugall entertainment, to  
Your visiting friends.

*Clare.* If you have a brother,

Kinsman, or friend, that does in pittie grieve at  
The tyranny you live in, him it shall be felony  
To converse with, we in tissue and plush will  
Brave it while you walke in fustian, weel  
When we please have our faire coach and horses  
To carry us up to London to aske counsell of  
Our mothers and our gossips how to abuse you.  
You shall be still obedient, we commanding.  
And if a Lord or courtly gentleman,  
Whom we stile servant, out of love sometimes  
Gives us a visit, you shall not repine :  
If we forsake your bed to goe to his.

*Gra.* And if you chance, as fooles will oft be  
Peeping to spye us coupling, with respective silence,  
You shall deparr, not daring to bedew  
Your eyes with tears for grief that you are cuckolds,  
Nor to exalt your honors above your neighbours,  
But big with joy triumph that you have wives  
That are in so much credit, as to have

Perfon

*Wit in a Constable.*

Persons of quality, take the paines to get your  
Heires to your large reuencwes.

*Tim.* Very right,

Tis not the fashion now adayes for knights  
To get their owne sons, tis sufficient for us  
If we can leave them lands, no matter who  
Was their true fathers.

*Cl.* Say sir *Timothy*

If upon these conditions you can like  
The match is perfect: but faith take my counsell,  
Make not your selves meere raskalls: the reproach  
To boyes and schollers, subjects fit for ballads,  
Not worthy M Ps name to them, good Sir *Timothy*  
Have pittie on your selfe, and marry rather  
In your owne tribe, some damsell that can churne,  
Make Cheese and Apple pies with Currants in them,  
And Mr. *Holdfast* twere farre better for you to  
Match with some grave doctors impe at Cambridge  
Or else as twas your use when your a student,  
Lye with your bed maker.

*Tim.* Very right,

Yet I doe know all this is but in-jest,  
To make us love you better.

*Hold.* True sir *Timothy*,

Speake as it were to let us understand  
By an Irony as we the learned call it,  
How well they meane to use us: therefore in  
My judgement it were requisite with all speed,  
While there in this good humour  
To strike the match up.

*Tim.* Very right, we are

No Jackdawes to be fright with these Scar-crowes,  
Mistris your hand, and if you'l have me so,  
If not so likewise: but you will repent it,  
You'l scarcely meet two that will offer fairer  
Then we have done.

*Cl.* But doe you meane performance,  
Truely of these conditions.

*Hold.*

*Writ in a Constable.*

*Hold.* As sincerely  
As ere we meane to eate.

*Tim.* Or drinke good Ale  
At mother *Huff*'s mornings.

*Grace.* You'll confesse this  
Before the Priest and witnesses.

*Hold.* Before  
The Congregation, or at a Commencement  
Before the Univerſity.

*Clar.* That you'll be  
Honest contented Cuckolds, beare your heads  
As peaceably, and with as much obedience,  
As the tam't beast ith' City.

*Tim.* On my Knight-hood.

*Hold.* On my gentility.

*Clar.* Why then strike hands on't ;  
Since you will needs undoe your selves, 'twere folly  
To indeavour to redeeme you : but this night  
We will be marry'd, and in private,  
Not yours nor our friends being acquainted with it.  
Weele meet you any where, procure the license,  
And weele be ready ; so farewell : to night,  
Or not at all lets heare from you.

*Exeunt Clara, Grace.*

*Hold.* And feele us too ere morning, 'tshal goe hard else.  
*Sir Timothy*, was not this wisely carryed :  
To let them have their sayings? but we will not  
Be such itarke fooles to doe what we have promis'd ;  
When they're ours once, we may rule them easily  
At our owne pleasures.

*Tim.* Very right ; and use them  
At our owne pleasures : But see here's your Mr.  
And Mr. Constable your Landlord.

*Enter Grimes, Busie.*

*Hold.* Landlord, wolcome  
On my Gentility, to my house that must be.  
Thou thoughtst, because I did weare Lokram shirts  
Ide no wit : but harken thee, I have got

G

The

*It is a Constable*

The wench of Gold : Sir *Timothy*, and I  
Have stricke the stroake old boy : to night's the night,  
Thou shalt know more of it ere twelve of Clocke,  
And then believe me : *Grimes* goe you to th' office;  
There's mony, fetch a Licence.

*Tim.* There's more money,  
Bring me a Licence too ; sure as we woold  
Weele wed together,

*Busie.* How's this ? Gentlemen  
I shall have gloves I hope.

*Held.* And favours too,  
Thy daughter *Nell* shall have my Bride garters,  
And thy fore-man my poynts : But honest Landlord,  
I know th'art excellent at a device,  
This matter must be private, not my father;  
Nor Mr. Alderman must be acquainted,  
Till all is finished : Could thy wit but helpe us  
To plot this finely : *Charles* and *Grace* will meet us,  
At any place where weele appoynt.

*Bus.* How's that?  
He set you presently in' way, my house  
Shall be your randevous : looke after ten  
The houre of meeting : there he have prepar'd  
For the two Ladyes a Sedan that shall  
Carry them thence unscene through the watch  
At Ludgate, where I exercise my office,  
Into white-Friers, there shall a little Levite  
Meet you, and give you to the lawfull bed,  
With much celerity: give me your mony, & I'll take out the li.  
How's that now?

*Tim.* Very right.  
*Bus.* Meane time my daughter *Nell* shall give them notice  
How all's contriv'd, they'll be willing,  
When they shall know the managing's committed  
To my discretica ; but about your business;  
It will grow late oth' suddaine.

*Held.* Come Sir *Timothy*, *Bus.* *Held.* *Tim.* *Grimes*

*Bus.* So, so, as I would have it, if I doe not  
Doe something to exalt the fame of Constables,

May



*It is a comfortable.*

May I be hang'd upon my Name of Office.  
Ha ! *Valentine* and *Free-will* with my daughter ?  
They must not see me. *Exit.*

*Enter Valentine, Free-will, Luce.*

*Luce.* Tis certaine Mr. *Free-will* they are contracted,  
And this night to be married ; I am sorry  
You should be thus supplanted, by two such  
Dull witlesse ideots : but they are so bent on it,  
That when I speake in your behalfe, my Mistris  
Stopt my mouth with a blow oth' lips : see here  
They are themselves ; if you doe any good,  
It must be now or never. *Ent. Clar. Grace.*

*Clar. Grace.* Ha, ha, ha.

*Free.* What doe the Monkeyes laugh at?

*Clar.* To behold

Two such trim gallants as your selves, like Asles,  
Shaking your empty Noddles ore the Oates  
You saine would cate, but must not lick your lips at,  
You thought to have wonne us by your wis. where lyes it ?  
In your gay cloaths ; perhaps so, if you can  
Out-sweare the faithfull Tayler, that's unpaid yet,  
Or cheat your Semptresse. Troth make safe retreat  
Into the Suburbs ; there you may finde cast wenches,  
Who will in pitty have you : and for dowry,  
Bring you an ampler stocke of hot diseases,  
Than you are already furnish'd with. We Orphans  
Oth' City have more charity to our selves,  
Than to wed Surgeons boxes.

*Grace.* When our portions

Shall be consum'd in Potheccaries Bills,  
Or giving Doctors fees ; or at best use,  
Serve but to purchase Sacke ; or be as tribute  
Paid toth' three Kings ; or piously bestowed  
Upon *Jerusalem*.

*Free.* No, you'd best reserve them,  
Till these you wed be beg'd for fooles ; and then

*Wit in a Constable.*

They will be seas'd to better use. You think now  
You have broke our galls with anger that you have  
Resolv'd on other husbands : who would have you ?  
But two such idots, fit to be the styles  
To the vast pride and lust lurkes in your blood,  
Derivative from the City : for our selves,  
Why should you have a thought we could descend  
So much from gentries honour, to mixe with you?  
Tis true, you appear handsome, but you paint  
Worse then a Bawd, or waiting-woman, in love  
With the spruce Chaplaine.

*Val.* For your haire let's see

Your eye-browes badge : oh tis not your owne ;  
Be modest and confesse it : tis a Peruke,  
I saw it at the French-mans in the Strand,  
The other day : and though you hold your head up,  
It is suppos'd it growes too neare your shoulders,  
And you weare iron bodies, to keep downe  
And rectifie the crooked paths that are  
In this same hill your body.

*Free.* Nay, besides

You're infinitely lascivious, tis reported  
Y'ave kild the reverend Alderman at least,  
Ten Prentises, besides foure journy-men,  
With too much labour : That you will be drunke  
Our selves can testifie : and with these imperfections  
This inexhausted Magazin of vices,  
Could you imagine we would have you? no,  
Heaven give you joy, with your well-chosen spouses,  
May they be patient Cuckolds, that's all the harme  
Weele wish them : the more fooles, more fit for husbands  
To such hot wild-cats.

*Clare.* Well Mr. Free-wit,

I thought how ever we, in mirth, or madness,  
Could have transgress'd civility, that you  
Would not have made such a severe construction  
Of our intentions : how i've lov'd you, heavens  
Can beare me righteous witness : but mans faith

*Wit in a Constable.*

Is fickle as his shadow, never scene,  
But when the Sunne shines.

*Grace.* And that you, whom I  
Even at the first view lov'd, and fixt my heart on:  
Should not alone contemne me, but with these  
Abuses wound my fame, torments my soule  
Beyond the strength of patience, heaven forgive you!

*Free.* They are our owne, deare *Valentine*: our owne as surely,  
As if the officious Priest had put the Ring  
Upon their pretty fingers; why you need not  
Take words with such unkindnesse *Clare*, your selves  
Being the occasion.

*Clar.* Such discourtesies  
From friends; nay, such beloved friends as you were,  
Wounds deeply Mr. *Freewis*.

*Free.* Prethee *Clara*  
No more remonstrances of this unkindnesse,  
Drye thy faire eyes, or I shall else grow childish,  
And weep for company: poore heart i'me sorry  
Th'art thus distemper'd; prethee sweet forgive me;  
We will be friends, and instantly steale hence,  
And end all difference in a happy marriage.

*Clar.* Ha, ha, ha: hold the mans head, hee'l sworne  
I feare oth' suddaine: marry you; goe boast  
How you've abus'd us, and doe not forget  
This part oth' story, twill much grace the action,  
That you were foold agen into beliefe  
That we could love you: ha, ha, ha.

*Ex. Clare, Grace.*

*V. l.* We have made our selves fine fooles, a poxe upon them:  
I knew their teares could not be serious:  
They onely fell from their left eye, as wealthy  
Young widowes weep for their old husbands. *Freewis*  
They're lost, past all recovery.

*Free.* Who can helpe it:  
There are more wives ith' Kingdome; yet I me vex  
That two such gulls should carry them: lets goe seeke  
Sir *Timothy* and my Cozen *Holdfast* out,  
And geld them, then proclaime them to be Eunuchs.

*It is in a Constable.*

That course may spoile their marriage.

*Enter Bus.*

*Bus.* I have o're-heard them all, and it conduces

Much to my purpose : now, or never *Bus.*

Shew thy selfe a true sparke, that Constables

Hereafter may be thought to have some wit.

More than is in their staffe. Good day to you gallants.

I have some businessse with you.

*Val.* Your name is *Bus.*

*Bus.* The same body.

Your friend, although a Constable; there were two Ladyes

Went lately from you.

*Free.* What of that?

*Bus.* They told me, as I am of their councill, that they lov'd you.

And though some words of course had past between you,

As oft does among friends : you know the Proverbe put lately,

In a Ballad, where I leard it, that *amantium ira amoris redunde-*

*g ario est* : yet that was but in jest, and in all haste,

Wished me to assure you, that if you would speedily

Take out the Licences this very night, twixt nine and ten, at my

Heuse they would meet you, and joyne with you in Matrimony.

*Free.* Is this truth?

*Bus.* How's that ? upon the faith of a man in office,

You may believe me : for a Priest, leave that

To my care gentlemen, we have one ready

Privately in White-Friers, the house anon

I will enforme you, and what way to take

To misse pursuit, if any should endeavour

Your apprehension.

*Val.* How may we deserve this kindness from you ?

*Bus.* When tis done, then thanke me ; meane time make haste,

and get the licences.

*Ex. Free. Val.*

I will pursue the rest, and if I fit not some body,

*Ent. Luc.*

Let me be held as other of my fellowes are, Asses in office,

*Luc.* thou art come as aptly as I could wish : be sure at nine of

Clock to be at home, and if you can bring with you two of the

gentlewomen's gownes, question not why?

But on my blessing doe it ; if this bit

Time shall report some Constables have wit.

*Ex. Luc.*

*Explicit Actus Quartus.*

*Actus*



*Wit in a Constable.*

## Actus Quintus, Scena prima.

*The Watch.*

*1 Watch.* **I**T is a cold night neighbour,  
And tis likely we shall have frost,  
That will make Sea-coales deare : heaven helpe poore people.  
Is no newes stirring neighbour ?

*Men. 2 Wat.* Yes, to day  
I heard such newes, heaven blesse us, as would make  
A mans heart quake in's belly : strange, and true,  
It came up in a Carret Boat from Sandwich  
Last tide ; an Oister wife, a good old Woman,  
Heard it at *Billingsgate*, and told my wife on it,

*3 Watch.* What is it ? pray lets heare it.

*Men. 2 Wat.* Marry, that twixt *Deale*  
And *Dover*, one fishing for Flounders, drew  
A Spaniards body up, slaine ith' late sea-fight,  
And searching him for monie, found ith' sets  
Of his great Ruste the — I shall think on't presently,  
Tis a hard word — the Inquisition.

*1 Wat.* O monstrous, what's that ?

I have not heard of such a Beast before.

*Men. 3 Wat.* You've heard nothing then :

It is a Monster very like the Man-drake  
Was shewen at Temple Barre.

*2 Wat.* You have heard nothing neither :  
The Monster's no such Monster : neighbor *Mandevell*  
You are a zealous brother, a Translator,  
Tis such a Monster as will swallow thee,  
And all the Brethren at *Amsterdam*,

And

*Wit in a Constable.*

And in new *England* at a morsell : verilies,  
Your yeas, and naves will not appease its stomacke,  
Twill sup them up as easily as a Tayler  
Would doe fixe hot loaves in a morning fasting,  
And yet dine after.

*Enter Busie and Parson.*

*Bus.* There is the Licencosir for Mr. *Holdfast*,  
And wife Sir *Timothy* ; you have instructions  
How things ought to be carryed : when I have  
Dispos'd my Watch, I will be there my selfe ;  
Meane time good Sir be carefull.

*Parf.* Doubt me not,  
Good Mr. Constable, tis not the first time  
I have espoused couples of as much worship,  
Behinde the Brickhills ; when tis done, tis done,  
And surely consummate. *Ex. Parson.*

*Bus.* Well said neighbours,  
Y're chatting wisely o're your Bills and Lanthorns,  
As becomes Watch-men of discretion : pray you  
Let's have no wit amongst you ; no discourse  
O'the Common-wealth ; I need not neighbours give you  
Your charge to night : onely for fashion sake.  
Draw neare and be attentive.

*3 Men.* I have edified  
More by your charge I promise you, than by  
Many a mornings exercise.

*Bus.* First, then,  
You shall be sure to keep the peace ; that is,  
If any quarrell, be ith' streets, sit still, and keepe  
Your rusty Bills from blood-shed ; and as't began  
So let it end : onely your zeales may with  
The Devill part them.

*1 Wat.* Forward Mr. Constable,

*Bus.* Next, if a thiefe chance to passe through your watch,  
Let him depart in peace ; for should you stay him,  
To purchase his redemption he'le impart  
Some of his stolne goods, and you're apt to take them,  
Which makes you accessory to his theft,

And

*Wit in a Constable.*

And so fit food for Turne.

*Men.* Good advise,

I promise you, if we have grace to follow it.

*Bus.* Next if a drunkard of a man disguis'd,

Desire to passe the gate, by all means opene,

You'l run your selves into the premises,

For your authority stretches but to men,

And they are beasts by stature.

*I Was.* Such as we are,

Horn'd beasts he means.

*Bus.* How's that; you carry lanternes,

Thou hast wit, and I'll reward'r, there's foure tokens

To buy the cheese: next for the female creatures,

Which the severer officers ith' suburbs

Terme girles, or wenches, let them passe without

Examining where they been: or taking from them

A single token: lasse good soules, they get

Their mony hard, with labours of their bodies,

And to exact on those were even extortion

Beyond a brokers.

*Men.* Yet they doe't

Without the City, I have heard a brewer,

Being one yeare in office, got as much from those

Good soules as bought him a new mash-fat,

And mended all his coolers.

*Bus.* How's that? we are bidden

Not to take ill examples, for your selves you have

Free leave for th' good oth' common wealth to

Sleepe after elevene time you may play at

Tray trip, or cockall for blacke puddings,

So now your charge is finish'd.

*Enter Sir Timothy, Grimes, Holdfast,*  
*with a Sedan.*

*I Was.* Stand, who goes there?

*Men.* Come before Mr. Constable.

*Hold.* Tis I Landlord,

H

There's

*What in a Constable*

There's sixteenpence to buy thy watch some Ale.  
Prithee tie up their tongues.

*Tim.* And there's fourpence  
To purchase tolls to it.

*Buf.* How's that, pray you, my master,  
You'r sober men and fit to be in the street,  
Whither goes all this carriages?  
These are the cunningst woddens bawdy houses  
Were ere invented, and these blew coate men rables,  
The most authenticke pimps: set downe and open  
Your chaire of sinne you wasite.

*Hold.* Why good Landlord,  
You will spoyle all, doe you not know your tenent,  
Not *Jeremy Holdfast*?

*Buf.* How's that? not my master,  
Upon a watch, He lay my life they've stolne  
Some city orphane, they're loath to have  
Their load discover'd.

*Hold.* There's ten shillings Landlord  
To buy thee sack: although it be thy office,  
And thou art sworne to't, for a friend tis *holdfast*  
To breake an oath: I will forswear my selfe  
A hundred times to doe thee good.

*Exeunt Holdfast, Timothey, Grimes, and Sallow.*

*Buf.* I am  
Appeas'd, march on: looke you remember my  
Instructions: so this money was well gotten  
And 'tshall as merrily be spent, you need no  
More, club your halfe pence farles to purchase Ale,  
You've an exchequer the blamptier than lot,  
This same should be some Lady from a labor,  
Her waiters smell of groning cheefe: good night  
Gentlemen, pay the Porter, what it twelve pence  
Share it amongst you.

*Mr.* Mr. Constable  
Tis very late, a fire and a browne rof new,  
With some of mother *Trundle* Ale, I promise you  
Would comfort much the inwards.

*Buf.*



*Ans.* How's that? *Ans.* It is hereticall: Sack's the Orthodoxall Liquor: and now I thinke ont, you two, and *Mundrell* Shall with me to th' Saint Johns head: there is A cup of pure Quary, and we'll have it: I will beate your heads, y<sup>e</sup> own bills, And weare your Lanchonney in your robes buldies: My masters, you that say behind e obseved, My charge with strictness, and if any business Be of importance, call me.

*I Wat.* Now my masters, Shall I expound a motion to you, shall wee Share, and share like this money?

*4 Wat.* With all our hearts.

*I Wat.* Lets see: it comes it to a peccenthere's eleven groats, And we are five of us, that is — that is let me see, seven pence a No, no, I lye, tis eight pence, and six pence over.

*4 Wat.* Right, right, this is to be broke learn'dy He's a good Arimetick: but stay neir' hours Here comes more company: come before the Constable.

*Enter Covet, Sir Geffery, Formall with a Linke.*

*Cov.* This is the government the elfy keepes, How doe you lik't Sir Geffery?

*Geff.* Very well,

I doe not thinke all Chastendome affords The like for formall discipline.

*I Wat.* Leave your prating, And come before the Constable, though he be not Here himselfe, theres those that can examine you?

*Cov.* You doe with masters to keepe diligent watch, Theres many varlets as these houres commie Disorders in the City: Wheres the constable?

*I Wat.* Good master Alderman, I cry your worship mercy, Because your worship wanted your worshipfull home, We did not know you: Mr. Constable

And please your worship is but at next doore: this is a  
Drinking a pint of sacke.

*Cov.* How at a Taverne?

*1 Wat.* At the Saine Johns head.

And please your worship, when if your worship please,

You may have excellent sacke, and please your worship.

*Cov.* This is the sowl's enemy I ever

Heard on this city, that a Constable

Who ought to see good order kept, should be

At these unlawfull houres, breeding disorder,

And in an open Taverne. Good Sir Geffrey

Beare me but company, He make the knave

A faire example to all men in office, how they

Come nere a bush: watchmen looke well

To the charge committed to you: for your Constable.

He make him kisse the counter, light on Fatwell

*1 Wat.* A threwd man this, if ere he live to be

Lord Major, he mercy upon us: neighbour surely

Tis very late, and I was up till twelve

Last night mending my wive's bodice, shall we

Each to his bulke and take a nod?

*Others.* Agreed, agreed.

*Enter Watch.*

*Basel.* Mordwell, watchmen

in a Taverne.

How say you?

*Bas.* Set downe your trusty Bells my sparkes, and let us

Watch ore a cup of Sacke, heretis will make you

Each one an Alderman: a bigger glasse boy,

I doe not love these chimbles, they are fit

For none but precise Taylors, that doe sip,

In zeale, and swear endigns over their wine,

To cheat their customers: so this is something

A score or two of these my sparkes, will let

Our braises a floate, and then weel talke as wisely,

As all the common Councell, how's that now?

*Then.* Mr. Constable

lma

H

Your

*Wit in a Constable.*

Y'are in the right I promise you: I feele  
My selfe already growing from a watchman  
Into a head-borow.

*Bus.* How's that? thou shalt be  
A Constable within this halfe houre *Merridell*,  
Carry thy staffe with the red Crosse and Dagger  
In as much state, as the best goldsmith,  
That ere bore office in Chosp-side; here's to thee,  
Hang care and Cosenage; let mercers use it  
In the darke shops: I am a Linnen Draper,  
Love wit and Sacke, and am resolv'd to thrive by't,  
When they shall break like bottles: Here lets canvas  
This quart, and then will burne off another;  
And drinke a health to *Holland*, and the mad boyes  
That traile the puissant Pike there: how's that; doe you peepe?

*Enter Fishers Boy.*

*Boy.* Please you hear a good song Gentlemen?

*Bus.* These squeakers, doe claime more  
Priviledge in a Taverne,  
Then a man in office; into every room  
They thrust their stilled heads; and I de bin at it  
With some distressed Damsell, that I had taken  
Late in my watch, thus I de bin serv'd: ile have  
An Edict made against them at *Guild Hall*,  
Next sitting certainly.

*Boy.* A very new song and please your worships gentlemen.

*Bus.* There you lye boy;  
I doubt it is some lamentable stuffe,  
Oth' Swine-fac'd gentlewoman, and that youle grunt out  
Worse than a parish Boare when he makes love  
Unto the Vicars sow; her story's stale boy,  
'T has beene already in two playes.

*Boy.* An't please your worships,  
My song is of a Constable.

*Bus.* How's that? a Constable,  
Tis not my selfe; I hope ime not exalted  
Into a ballad: Dare you sirrah abuse  
Officers in your Madrigalls; you deserve,

*Wit in a Constable*

And so does he that made it be whipt for  
Boy. Pray heare it first the no such matter on my credit  
Bus. How's that? Well, on thy credit I will haire it  
Callin your company; welcome my Masters  
Here: wet your wounds with this blood  
Some lofty Sonnets in the penne of Constabulary  
And never feare the whipping-post hereafter

*Constable's Song*

**S**ing and rejoyce, the day is gone,  
And the night shall appeare,  
In which the Constable on the watch  
Of crasby watch, does with his Peeres  
The simple watch, men send af heath,  
Sleep for the good oth' Common-wealth.

'Tis his office to doe so,  
Being bound to keep the peace,  
And in quiet sleep will knowe  
Mortall quarrells, and lend he murther cause,  
A Constable may thus fairly beate,  
Sleep for the good oth' Common-wealth.

Unlesse with Nobler thoughts inspir'd,  
To the Taverns he resort,  
Where with Sacke his Sences fir'd,  
He raignes as fairy King in Court,  
Drinking many a hasty health,  
Then sleeps for the good oth' Common-wealth.

With a comely girle, whom late  
He had taken in his watch,  
Oft he steales out of the gate  
Her at the old sport to match,  
Though it may impair his health,  
He sleeps with her for the good oth' Common-wealth.



*Wit in a Constable.*

*Who then can Constables deny  
To be persons brave and witty,  
Since they only are the eye,  
The Glory, the delight of all City,  
That with staffs and handspikes light  
Are like blacke Pluto Erubers of the night.*

*Alb.* An excellent Ditty I promise you.

*Buf.* Well done boy.

There's twelve pence for you Knaves, and tell the Poet  
That made it, if hee come to me, I'll give him  
A quart of Sacke to whet his Muse.

*Ent. Drawer.*

*Draw.* Sir, below there's one enquires for you, and I suppose him  
To be at least an Alderman.

*Buf.* And if he be  
The Major and his horse, let them come up.  
Flinch Squeakers into another roome: Good Mr. Alderman  
Tis strange you are abroad so late, will' please you  
To taste a cup a Sack, twill warme your stomacke  
After your walking.

*Ent. Cov.*

*Sir Giff.*

*Formall.*

*Cov.* No Sirrah, ile not be  
Partaker of your riot: this the watch  
You keep good Mr. Constable? in troth  
The City's much beholding to your care,  
And they shall understand it, in a Taverne  
A fit place for an Officer: but ile send you  
To one fitter for you to the Counter,  
Lay hands I charge you, beare him hence,  
Ile have you all laid fast else.

*Buf.* How's that? I hope you'll let us  
Drinke off our sacke first: twere farre better sir,  
In my poore judgment, that you sit down in peace,  
As does befit your gravity, and drinke  
A friendly cup or two: then for the first  
Offence to send your neighbour to the Counter:  
Pray sir be not so fierce, a glasse, or two  
Will mollifie your hard heart.

*Cov.* Will you not stirre knaves?

Where

*Wit in a Constable.*

Where is the Master of the house? ile make  
This *Buse* an example.

*Bus.* Pray doe not sir,  
Perhaps y'are bashfull sir, and will not drinke,  
Cause you want coyn to play: ile lend you some;  
Or if you scorn to borrow, you may dip  
Your chains; a good pawne never shames the master,  
Pray sit downe sir; we just now had Musicke,  
Ile call them in agen.

*Cov.* Within, the master of the house, ile have  
These knaves indicted for this bold contempr,  
And whipt about the City.

*Bus.* You may see sir,  
My Watch-men know their duty, they'll obey  
None but the Constable, and ile experience,  
If they'll know me for one: My masters, take  
This Alderman and his company I charge you,  
And carry them straight to th' Counter, ile secure you  
'Gainst all the harme that followes.

*Seise on the Alderman and Sir Geffery.*

*Men.* Come, come, come along sir.

*Cov.* Dare you doe this sirrah?

*Bus.* Yes, and answer't too sir.  
Y'ave met a Constable that has the wit,  
To know the power of's office: neighbour *Mendwel*,  
Because they'll take him for a Rat ith' Counter,  
And Ide be loath to have his reverend beard  
Be twitch'd off for his Garnish, to my house  
Convey him, and that comely Knight, and bid  
My maid shew them a Chamber; ile deale kindlier  
With you, then you'd have done with me: there watch them  
Till I come home: how's that now?

*Cov.* Sirrah, sirrah, ile make you smock for this.

*Mend.* Come, we lose time sir. *Bus.* Let him have  
A good fire pray you. So, all works as't had bin  
Molded afore in waxe: boy there's your reckoning.  
Now to my sparkes, Ive done that will be talkt on ith' City,  
And registred, a Constable was witty.

*Prose*

*Wit in a Constable.*

*Freewit, Thorowgood, Valentino, Lucio, Clara.*

*Clar.* You thinke you have us sure now. This same *Busie* Is a meere cheating Rascall.

*Thor.* Come, your rage Is uselesse now: he has done better for you, Than I by th' circumstance perceiue you had Intended for your selues: what would you've done With two such March-pane husbands? I believe, For all you set a good face on the matter, Twas your owne plot.

*Clar.* Ours? then may we dye Virgins, And these same trusty yooths, now cald our husbands, Be suddainly transform'd to Eunuchs: we Had thought young *Holdfast*, and Sir *Timothy* Had bin the Squires had usher'd us, and them We had resolv'd to couple with.

*Free.* Sweete *Clara*

No more of this; for all your queint dissembling, I know you love us, better than to part For a slight quarrell; now we're man and wife, And we will love you, if you'll be obedient, And get such Boyes upon you, as shall people Cheap-side with wit five generations after us.

*Val.* Feare not thy fathers frownes: sweet *Grace* I have An *Aldermans* heire a joyncture.

*Enter Busie.*

*Bus.* Bleffe you my hearts of gold, and give you joy. Frowne not good Mistris *Clara*, I knew your minde And so fulfild it.

*Free.* Constable, ile have Thy *Annals* writ, in a farre larger volume, Than *Speed* or *Hollingshed*.

*Clar.* Well Mr. *Busie*, Y'ave serv'd us sweetly.

*Bus.* How's that? I hope your husbands Anon will serve you sweetlier: faith I thought There was no wit in't, that you two should cast

Your selves away on two such gulls, your portions.  
Deserv'd more noble husbands: therefore finely  
After you were gone downe, to take your Chariot,  
Instead of them, when I'll beare while my daughters  
Held in disson, I sent these, now your husbands,  
To exercise their office: Now you are married,  
I shall have Gloves I hope?

Clar. Yes, and such favours  
As thou shalt weare in triumph: but what have you  
Done with our other sweet-hearts?

Bos. How's that? match them  
To two will hold them play: Come will you travel?  
Your father Mistis Gravel is at my home,  
Thither you shall, and if he will be angry,  
Let him be pleas'd to send: Advance my sparkes,  
He be your valiant.

Exit.

Sir Geoffrey, Covet, Formalis, Watchmen.

Geff. Storme not to Mr. Alderman, the man  
Has done no more helcov't, than what his office  
Will beare him out in.

Cov. He spend a thousand  
Pound, but he be reveng'd: a sawcy rascal  
In my owne Ward to serve me thus?

Enter Timothy, Holdfast, Grimes, Luke, Nell.

Hold. Nay, come forward Ladyes,  
Although your father sweet-heart, be in our search,  
Be not abash'd; come forward, though you kept  
Your tongues in peace, ere since our going forth,  
And nere spake word, unlesse before the Parson  
When we committed Matrimony, yet now  
Pull off your Maskes and Vailes, and shew your faces,  
Be not asham'd of them.

Cov. Who's here? Sir Timothy and your sonne, He say  
My life on't they have struck a marriage up  
Without our knowledge.

Geff. Very likely Jeremy.

Hold.



*Wit in a Constable.*

*Hold.* No more words fit tis done, I and *Sir Timothy* have hit the white : Good father *Cov.* be not angry mood now I have wed your daughter, And he your Neece, wee'll use them kindly : pray you Bid give us joy ; your daughter is so fearefull, She dares not aske you blessing.  
*Cov.* This qualifies all anger, I forgive them.  
*Luce.* Forgive us sir ? you doe not heare us aske it, Nor need we your remission.

*Cov.* Ha ! who are these ? *Sir Giffary* we are cheated Abhominably, cheated by this Constable, This rascall *Bufile*, these are his daughters.

*Luce.* Nor are we ashamed To owne him for our father, that has provided Us two such wealthy husbands.

*Hold.* Nell, I did not thinke you would have serv'd me thus Unkindly, gentle *Nell*,

*Nel.* Unkindly sir, so what ? to make you waster Of all I have. Ile use you kindly trust me, When you come drinke a nights home, in the morning Ile make you amber Caudles.

*Hold.* Saist thou so ; Give me thy hand : Father pray be not angry, My Wife's my wife, and so I will maintaine her Gainst all the world. *Sir Timothy*, your spoise Is not to be contemn'd, she's a good girle. And therefore pray regard her.

*Tim.* Very like, for your sake I will doe much : Although I find my selfe Made a starke Ass. Come hither *Luce*

*Enter Clare, Grace, Thorongood, Freewit, Valentine, Bufile.*

*Grace.* Your pardon Sir, and blessing.

*Clar.* We have done sir

What cannot be undone, now if you will Be foolish now, and vex your selves, you may Be laught at for your labour, they're our husbands, And we no cause now to repeat our choyce, Nor you Sir to repine at.

*Freewit.* Our duties

And

*It is in a Constable.*

And after carriage, shall deserve your love,  
Nor our fortunes Sir so mean, but may  
Merit their portions.

*Cov.* Well, you shall not  
Report me small; you have my consent,

And blessing with it; neighbour *Basse*, Ile

Be friends with you, and at my intreaty

Sir *Griffy* shall be my counsellor.

*Bas.* How's that?

Give me thy eldest brother Knight, my daughters

Shall not come without portions; they shall have

Each one a Bolt of *Holland*, that's enough.

Sonne Knight give me thine too; and some *Holland*

Weele beas merr boyes, and drinke old *Sacke*

In plenteous glasses, till we all grow witty,

As humorous *Poets*, to your beds, the next morn;

Your wedding dinner shall be mine, weele dance,

And have the Song with *Constable*; March faire,

And get each one a chopping boy by Morning;

I and my Watchmen here will drinke your healths,

Though we doe lose our owne by it.

*Enter Mr. Tasse,*

Wee're all beholding to you, and 'tis fit,

We should confesse this *Constable* had wit.

**FINIS.**

